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Letter dated 24 July 2006 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

Pursuant to Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), I have the honour to transmit the attached report on the international security presence in Kosovo covering the period from 1 to 31 May 2006 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would bring the present letter and its annex to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kofi A. **Annan**

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Annex

[Original: English]

Monthly report to the United Nations on the operations of the Kosovo Force

1. This report covers the period from 1 to 31 May 2006.

2. As at 31 May 2006, the total number of troops in theatre was 16,130, which included 2,708 troops from non-NATO countries.

3. There was no change to the status of partner non-NATO country contributions.

Security

4. The overall security situation remains calm but tense. On the political front, three more rounds of direct talks between Belgrade and Pristina were held successively on 4, 23 and 31 May 2006 in Vienna. On 4 May, the parties discussed again issues related to decentralization, including the definition of criteria to establish the municipal borders, the formation of new municipalities with a Serb majority, and the resolution of the Mitrovica issue. The talks were difficult owing to the unwillingness of either side to compromise. At the meeting on 23 May, discussions focused on the protection of religious sites and cultural heritage in Kosovo. In a constructive atmosphere, the parties agreed on the need for a continued international military presence to protect the sites and on the legal status of the Serbian Orthodox Church. Despite some convergence on a number of practical issues, the parties remain diametrically opposed on substantive issues. On 31 May, the negotiating parties discussed economic issues, including external debt and property. Belgrade challenged and requested the immediate halting of the ongoing privatization process in Kosovo, whereas Pristina focused on the issue of payment of war damages and external debt repayment.

5. During the month of May, no significant inter-ethnic incidents were reported.

6. No significant incidents against KFOR were recorded.

7. A total of 350 incidents related to unexploded ordnance, illegal weapons possession, weapon and ammunition findings, drugs, human trafficking and counterfeit currency were reported during the past month, compared to 409 incidents in the previous month. Weapons seizures made up the vast majority of incidents during this month, whereas the number of reported incidents of unexploded ordnance decreased. Smuggling activities will continue to be one of the highest threats to a safe and secure environment and KFOR troops in Kosovo. Confrontations could occur if KFOR troops cross paths with smugglers. Most of the Kosovo border is affected by smuggling activity; however, most of the smuggling is concentrated in the eastern area, on the border with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.* Despite the frequent seizures of illegal weapons, there is no proof that the weapons were intended for extremist or criminal groups. Most of the weapons found are probably intended for hunting or personal protection. Drug trafficking is still considered to be one of the most profitable criminal businesses for local organized crime groups. The limited number of reported smuggling-related incidents

* Turkey recognizes the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

is assessed to be the result of efforts made by KFOR and UNMIK to fight illegal trafficking along the borders. However, this can also be an indicator that the smugglers are finding new ways to avoid detection by UNMIK and KFOR. As the weather conditions improve, no significant increase in reported criminal acts is expected. The criminal threat to KFOR is assessed as low.

8. KFOR continues operations to prevent ethnic violence and protect patrimonial sites and remains vigilant to deter possible threats directed against international organizations and military bases. The Force continues to improve its crowd and riot control capabilities in order to be better prepared to counter any resurgence in violence.

Compliance by the Federal Army of Serbia and Montenegro and the Ministry of Internal Affairs Special Police

9. There is nothing to report.

Kosovo Protection Corps

10. Ten cases of non-compliance have been opened.

11. The KFOR Inspectorate for the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC) ensures compliance through the day-to-day supervision of KPC using unannounced roll calls and inspections. During May the consolidation of the KFOR Kosovo-wide assessment reflecting KPC fulfilment of Standard 8 Goals was finalized. Parts of the KFOR assessment were presented at the public standards meeting and in the KPC Development Group on 31 May 2006. Furthermore, KFOR headquarters and each Multinational Task Force has finalized the additional training programme for KPC in support of the directive of the Joint Force Command.

12. The current active personnel establishment is 3,038. There are 203 (6.69%) active ethnic minority members (178 male, 25 female): 34 Ashkali, 4 Roma, 11 Egyptian, 17 Croat, 32 Bosniac, 14 Muslims, 36 Turk, 2 Goran and 53 Serbs. The total number of ethnic minorities decreased by four from last month. The recruitment of minorities remains a KPC priority. Currently, the percentage of minorities within KPC still remains short of the goal of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and there are 22 open slots left in the active personnel establishment list. The reserve list includes 2,000 positions, 1,883 filled, of which the ethnic minority number is 50 (2.65%). Multinational Task Forces and KFOR Inspectorate headquarters carried out 46 roll calls; 1,027 (69.8%) of 1,470 checked KPC members were on duty in their barracks and 212 (14.4 per cent) were on duty elsewhere. The total of 1,239 active duty strength (duty in barracks and duty elsewhere) shows that an average of 84.2 per cent of KPC personnel attended work schedules. Roll calls show a slight decrease in the number of personnel reported absent without permission.

13. KPC conducted 12 training courses with 171 attendees.

14. Nine ceremonies were held during May 2006. A total of 711 KPC members and approximately 3,500 civilians were involved.

Conclusion

15. The overall situation in Kosovo will remain tense because of the ongoing status talks, particularly the start of the high-level discussions between Belgrade and Pristina on the future status of Kosovo, as well as the potential increase in inter-ethnic tension as weather conditions improve. The threat level against UNMIK and other international community facilities remains medium, and the threat level against KFOR is low.